

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY
MEETING**

City Hall Council Chambers
August 24, 2026

AGENDA



1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda

These items are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There isn't a separate discussion for these items unless a Councilmember so requests, then it is moved to the end of the Council Consideration Items.

a. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the July 27, 2026, minutes

4. Commission Consideration Items

a. EDA Update

No Council Action Required — for Discussion Only.

5. Adjournment

Council Regular Meeting

DATE: 8/24/2026
TO: Economic Development Authority
FROM:
THROUGH:
BY: Shannon Pettit, City Clerk
SUBJECT: Approval of Minutes

Requested Council Action:

- Motion to approve the July 27, 2026, minutes

Background:

Budget Issues:

Inclusive Community Engagement:

Antiracist/Equity Policy Effect:

Strategic Priorities and Values:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2026.07.27 EDA

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF BROOKLYN CENTER
IN THE COUNTY OF HENNEPIN AND THE
STATE OF MINNESOTA

REGULAR SESSION
JULY 27, 2026
CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Brooklyn Center Economic Development Authority (EDA) met in Regular Session, called to order by President April Graves at 6:24 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

President April Graves and Commissioners Dan Jerzak, Teneshia Kragness, and Laurie Ann Moore. Also present were Deputy City Manager Daren Nyquist, Planning Manager Ginny McIntosh, Economic Development Manager Ian Alexander, City Clerk Shannon Pettit, and City Attorney Siobhan Tolar.

Commissioner Kris Lawrence-Anderson was absent and excused.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

President Graves moved and Commissioner Moore seconded to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda, as amended, with the noted changes to the minutes, and the following item was approved:

3a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. June 22, 2026 – Regular Session

Motion passed unanimously.

4. COMMISSION DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Nyquist stated that the Staff doing the Novarium update are not at the meeting yet, but the EDA Update could be discussed first instead. President Graves noted that the two would be flipped then.

4a. EDA UPDATE

Planning Manager Ginny McIntosh noted that she had two brief updates regarding some of the EDA properties that are single-family detached properties. EDA Staff have spoken to several

developers or builders in the area about scattered sites that the EDA has, and the majority of the EDA's good residential properties were sold off a few years ago. The properties that the EDA does have for residential are really the leftovers that are smaller and non-conforming in locations around Brooklyn Boulevard, so they are not necessarily prime sites. The commercial properties going out for an RFP for a broker include, specifically, the property on 1601 James, which is a business mixed-use property right next to the FBI, and the other property is 1.1 acres next to the Northport Elementary on the frontage road off of Brooklyn Boulevard that was zoned for medium density housing or townhouses. There had been a proposal for that property, but it has since fallen through. At this point, EDA Staff are starting the process to identify brokers and expect to bring something back to the EDA in September to review in terms of a broker.

Ms. McIntosh noted that the billboard discussion was not at the top of the priority list, but EDA Staff have been communicating with some outdoor advertising companies regarding potential billboard signage. When looking at the deficit that the EDA Fund has, billboard advertising would be a potential path for providing some regular income or revenue to that fund by providing easements on certain sites that are owned by the EDA. The EDA could set up and retain a perpetual easement on some land that would be sold by the EDA and redeveloped. She noted that EDA Staff have communicated with three companies and are looking to bring discussion about this at the next EDA meeting.

Ms. McIntosh noted that CAPI is wrapping up their project and is hoping to be done by September 11 and finish up their community garden space. New Horizon was issued a certificate of occupancy up on the north end where a lot of work has been done, and is planning a ribbon cutting on August 11 at 2:30 p.m. She noted that if anyone is interested in attending, New Horizon asked her to communicate back to them. President Graves noted she got an invitation but will be out of town. Ms. McIntosh asked if anyone else would be able to attend. President Graves stated it sounded like the other three Councilmembers would all be in attendance.

Ms. McIntosh added that the following projects are all underway or near completion; Brooklyn Boulevard Dental is wrapping up their expansion in September. Luther Honda is also wrapping up their project for their additional service bays. Mazda Mitsubishi application came through for a trash room conversion and will be finished soon. Mount Cemetery is working through their remaining inspections, and the Social Security Administration work is wrapped up and got their certificate of occupancy and is planning on opening this month. Caribou Coffee is well underway with a \$1.5 million remodel of their office space. The Hmong Shopping Center at the former Kmart site had their building permit issued last week and will proceed with work on their new grocery store, new parking lot, and farmer's market this summer. The Oh, Pretty business got their certificate of occupancy last week and is planning on having a ribbon cutting. She added that there is one tenant space over at the shopping center on Humboldt that should be wrapping soon for LC Coffee and Smoothie Shop, and updates will be forthcoming.

Ms. McIntosh explained the EDA Staff are still working with Scooter's Coffee on their purchase and development agreement. There has been renewed interest in the CVS location both for complete teardown and redevelopment specifically for car washes, and other interest in grocery stores or medical use; nothing has been decided yet, but there have been quite a few inquiries.

Commissioner Jerzak noted that Ms. McIntosh mentioned the property at 1601 James, which has been vacant for years, and that EDA Staff have talked about the possibility for a request for proposal (RFP), but Novarium included that property in their concept plan. He asked if there would be any conflict or alignment with that property and how that decision will be made.

Ms. McIntosh noted that everything is in flux, and nothing is written, and if something changes, the EDA Staff can work with that, and Staff wants to keep things moving on the properties the EDA has. The property at 1601 James is one of the EDA's larger properties, and if Novarium has interest or a proposal to bring forward, Staff can address it then.

Commissioner Jerzak asked about the subdivided lot behind the FBI, and if there was any interest in that. Ms. McIntosh asked if he was still speaking about the property at 1601 James. Commissioner Jerzak stated the property he was discussing was behind the FBI and the Old Cracker Barrel. Ms. McIntosh confirmed that is the property at 1601 James, and is an irregularly shaped lot with a stormwater pond. Commissioner Jerzak added that the lot is really bifurcated back there and that makes it difficult. Ms. McIntosh agreed and noted that there are some constraints with that property, and the stormwater pond serves multiple properties, including the FBI. There have been a couple of proposals on that site in the past; one was a Carvana, and co-op office use and some lighter industrial uses. EDA Staff have not had any communication from the FBI, though, regarding the property.

President Graves thanked Ms. McIntosh for the update.

President Graves noted that since Novarium still had not arrived, the EDA would come back to it after the regular City Council meeting.

Commissioner Moore asked if Ms. McIntosh spoke about the two houses on Brooklyn Boulevard.

President Graves noted that she did not think Ms. McIntosh mentioned the two houses, but they look good. Commissioner Moore added that the homes look beautiful. President Graves added that the full plot on Brooklyn Boulevard is trying to be sold, not just the two homes.

Commissioner Jerzak asked if those two homes on Brooklyn Boulevard would continue to be rentals or not because of the development agreement, and the affordability part has now been appealed because of the foreclosures. President Graves suggested Staff put that information in the weekly update. Commissioner Jerzak stated he was fine with that information being put in the weekly update, and people ask him about it, so he wanted an update.

President Graves noted that if those properties were ready, people would be renting them and moving in. Commissioner Jerzak stated he had no doubt about that, but did not know about the cash flow for that.

President Graves reiterated that they would come back to the final EDA agenda item after the regular City Council meeting, and would take a 20-minute break prior to the Council meeting.

President Graves reconvened the EDA meeting at 9:01 p.m.

4b. NOVARIUM CONCEPT REVIEW

Economic Development Manager Ian Alexander stated the Novarium team is there and would like to introduce themselves. He asked if it was appropriate for them to speak at the podium. President Graves confirmed that would be better.

Mr. Alexander noted that Novarum is a newly established development platform and the leadership team collectively brings more than 50 years' experience in architecture, urban planning, real estate development, capital formation, construction management, entitlement, and public-private partnerships. He noted that Novarum recently purchased the Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Campus, which is a 24-acre site and a large development. He added that he has gotten to know many members of the Novarum team, and they are quite capable. The two reasons Novarum Development Partners is there are to propose a collaborative development with the City of Brooklyn Center. Novarum is working with River North Development Partners for the project oversight and coordination of this development, DJR Architecture and Collaborate Design Group on the urban design guidelines, WSB for Civil, Stormwater, Infrastructure Coordination, and the Moss Group for the Financial Pro Forma of structuring.

Mr. Alexander noted that the redevelopment districts include north of 694, which is called site 4A and site 4B; Heritage Center Loop, which is site 3B; the Opportunity Site, which is site 2A and 2B, and another site down by the Shingle Creek area. Novarum and its partners have control over parcels within sites 2A and 2B, and three and four. Site one is intentionally reserved for future coordinated development after successful delivery of sites 2A and 2B.

Mr. Alexander noted that Novarum is proposing an alternative to the traditional Master Developer framework, and as a Development Coordinator, opportunities remain for smaller and emerging developers to participate. Through multi-developer participation, development will become equitable and hopefully more rapid. Novarum Development Partners' framework addresses the urban design standards, infrastructure alignments, and clear pathways for developer participation, and is interested in working on the legislative agenda for support for the City. Novarum is also interested in regular meetings with City Staff and a performance-based approach that rewards results.

Mr. Alexander stated he would take a moment to assess parcel assembly; sites 2A and 2B are the most complicated, with multiple different individuals who own different parts. Novarum has done an impressive job getting every site in there, with the exception of the two that are owned by local community entity groups with site controller options for site control. He stated he would let Dean go through more details on the concept plan, but Novarum is proposing more of an urban setting in the City and less suburban in nature. Concept three involved two buildings across the street from City Hall, and Novarum is working with another developer who already has those sites under site control, and use is mixed-use retail on the bottom floor and residential above. Concept proposal for site 4A focuses on the potential to relocate businesses currently in the Opportunity Site. Novarum has option agreements in all three of the hotels in that location, as well as a

handshake agreement with Jambo Africa at this moment on their site. Novarum is looking for some innovative work in the City. He asked if he could turn it over to Dean Dovolis of Novarum to further explain.

Mr. Dovolis stated he wanted to introduce a few of the team members on Novarum.

Anthony Taylor, with River North Development Partners, introduced himself and noted that they are very excited to be a part of this team and are based in North Minneapolis. He noted that it is a new iteration of a company that has been doing urban infill development for 30 years and has a specific intent and commitment to looking at the way that urban communities are redeveloping. He noted that River North is also looking at community engagement in a unique way, starting with a foundation of culture as an asset and looking at historical culture in terms of how communities develop over time, and there is an important piece of how to capitalize on the deal, looking at market-rate development and how that interfaces with economic outcomes. He added that the work the City Staff have done with the 2030 Plan, and the Opportunity Site framing around outcomes in terms of quality of life, is really foundational to how River North works and the City will see continuously in the way they work and come to this group.

Faraaz Yussuf stated he wanted to thank everyone, but especially Mr. Alexander, who has been instrumental in bringing this whole team together. He noted that of all the cities he has worked in, Mr. Alexander has been very easy to work with and one of the few who has a passion for the City and developing it. He noted that Novarum is a relatively newer entity, and Mr. Dovolis serves as the Chief Executive Officer; his role is the Chief Operating Officer, and their third partner is Jamil Ahmed, who acts as Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Yussuf noted that Novarum brings over 50 years of experience in entrepreneurship and development and construction, along with Mr. Dovolis' background in architecture.

Mr. Yussuf noted that Novarum really believes in bringing experience together to make transformative development happen when visionary, public, and private partners come together around a common purpose. He noted that Novarum's specialization is really in repositioning underutilized properties into vibrant mixed-use destinations through strategic planning, public-private partnerships, financing entitlements, construction management, and long-term asset stewardship. Novarum's work includes housing, health care, education, commercial redevelopment, and catalytic mixed-use projects throughout Minnesota. He noted that the recent flagship development is the former Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Campus in South Minneapolis, which is now being transformed into Iconic Plaza. He added that the Wells Fargo Campus is 24 acres, where they did all of their Home Mortgage business out of several buildings that sat vacant for over three and a half years. Rather than seeing the Wells Fargo campus as another vacant office campus, Novarum reimagined and saw an opportunity to create a destination, a place where healthcare, retail restaurants, entrepreneurs, office users, and community organizations in the future of housing can all come together within an integrated ecosystem. It is a transformative approach that focuses on creating long-term economic vitality rather than redeveloping real estate. He stated he would give the presentation back to Mr. Dovolis to explain the vision.

Mr. Dovolis stated the EDA could look at the packet, which really demonstrates the power of opportunity and lessons learned. The Roof Depot project in the brochure is really a culmination of the community working very hard, and Novarum is there to guide them with a road map to follow. The Roof Depot took 10 years, but there is now a purchase agreement with Minneapolis, and it will close in the next few months, and that property will be owned by the community. The Roof Depot is the model that Novarum set up, but it will be the community's shares, their building, and a building that will have urban agriculture and community space both indoors and outdoors. The first lesson learned there is that there is really an intensity of the community's desire to shape their own future. The second lesson is Wells Fargo, which is also in the packet, and while Wells Fargo maintained the buildings, they abandoned them and dissolved their home mortgage department and left behind a million square feet and four thousand parking spaces. He noted that Novarum repositioned it, and the culture communities have come out in droves to be a part of it. Novarum is having open houses every Saturday, and there is so much interest in opening stores, creating restaurants, and providing the capital, and it has just unleashed the power that has been very significant. The project will be set up as an HOA to do the common elements, but this is a million square feet and a medical facility that will be filled within the next three months. The community desires to really shape that master plan.

Mr. Dovolis noted that the idea behind the implementation of the project in Brooklyn Center is vision; it is not going to be done by a single developer but to really have it built by community members with the idea that the little squares represent urban townhouses that residents would invest in. The bottom floor would be active retail of some origin, could be cosmetic, could be an office, a dentist, and the upper two floors would be housing. The first priority would be giving the community the first chance at it, and secondly would be the businesses, and third would be employees. The idea would be to set urban design guidelines that would state coherence in terms of facades and streets and a requirement that once the lot is purchased, the buyer has two years to build so there is no land speculation. There would be homes, townhomes, and some larger buildings that line the streets and create an infrastructure of community.

Mr. Dovolis noted that a water system would be created and connected to handle the stormwater and would be maintained by an HOA, which would be self-financed by the owners for all the maintenance for the parks and natural areas as well. This would eliminate any sort of debate on unkempt parks. The plan can also be incremental and has the ability to weave in different directions so the plan does not fail because certain pieces do not occur. This plan would institute a really great urban fabric that is two to three stories in size, and the more major buildings may be five to seven stories high. The goal is to have potentially 1,000 different owners and residents who are getting the benefits of owning property, getting the tax appreciation, and participating in the American dream. That is the idea of ownership, and that develops desire to have that chance, so instead of having communal renters, there is a community of urban owners with their own shops or stores.

Mr. Dovolis stated his request is to work with Mr. Alexander and the City to start weaving the stream and working as a public-private partnership to start putting this project together. He noted that there is a tremendous desire with this community to really start shaping it, and Novarum is anxious to get this project going. The goal is to create community, based on home ownership with

a variety of housing with co-ops while creating retail commercial structure and streets, and common water elements with amenities that create value to the properties. The project will be built and owned by residents of the City, and the goal at Novarum is to provide guidance in that implementation.

Commissioner Jerzak thanked Mr. Dovolis for this presentation and stated he is cautiously optimistic but looks forward to the specific asks of the City, as it is a huge undertaking. He noted that it has been described before by the President as monumentally game-changing for the City, and the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. He noted that any specific questions he has, he will send to the Interim City Manager and Mr. Alexander.

Commissioner Kragness stated that this team came in complimenting the Opportunity Site, and most people do not do that. She noted that the City has been trying to get started on it but is far from it and has not broken ground yet but complimented the work that has been done there; she appreciated it. She concurred with the assessment of Mr. Alexander as his passion for this City. She noted that having Anthony Taylor come in was the icing on the cake. She continued that Mr. Dovolis mentioned repositioning underutilized properties, and that is exactly what the City has at the Opportunity Site. So, for someone to come in and let people buy into the idea that the City can have nice things, and ownership and opportunities is very encouraging to hear. She stated she can envision people having ownership, especially for young businesses, and the opportunity is exciting, and she looks forward to seeing the plans that Novarum has.

President Graves stated she is excited about the work Mr. Dovolis and Mr. Alexander have been doing and sees a lot of the learnings she received in her early tenure as President when she went to New York and met with the folks at the School of Design and brought some of those ideas back to Staff. She stated she has been thinking about what the assets of Brooklyn Center are, and how to leverage those things, whether that is the cultural corridor and the water table that can be a hindrance to some or also an asset. This is about shifting the way the City has been looking at development to think about what Brooklyn Center can really offer, and what the City deserves, not just accepting whatever is brought to the City. She stated the Staff went through a really long master planning process and gathered a lot of important information and data from community members, but it still did not feel like it was the community's. This plan is more about putting the power back into people's hands and giving them ownership over designing it in a way that meets the needs of the people that live here. She added that people know that this is the last few months of being Mayor, and she is not running for re-election and hopes that the Council, Staff, and the community will be getting behind these kinds of opportunities that are about sharing power and opportunity and lifting everyone because when people get left behind, that is when there are more issues.

President Graves continued that she sees in how Mr. Dovolis has approached the Council with the partners that have been brought to the table that they are thinking not just about what is being built in the physical sense but on a cultural level as well, which is extremely beneficial to the City and will be a game changer. While it is a huge undertaking, with more hands the project goes a lot further and faster, and this is the approach to take. She stated she is excited Novarum presented, and is optimistic that her fellow Councilmembers/Commissioners want to have something happen

at the Opportunity Site too, and see the value of what is being proposed with this public-private partnership to get the ball rolling. She thanked the team for all the work done to get to this point.

Mr. Dovolis thanked all of the City Staff for their help. President Graves thanked everyone for sticking around until 9:30 p.m.

Commissioner Kragness stated she will be working with the Interim City Manager to get more information and details on the project.

5. ADJOURNMENT

President Graves moved and Commissioner Kragness seconded adjournment of the Economic Development Authority meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Council Regular Meeting

DATE: 8/24/2026
TO: Economic Development Authority
FROM: Ian Alexander, Economic Development Manager, Amy Loegering,
Economic Development Coordinator
THROUGH: Jason Aarsvold, Ehlers
BY: Amy Loegering, Economic Development Coordinator
SUBJECT: EDA Update

Requested Council Action:

No Council Action Required — for Discussion Only.

Background:

General Economic Development Updates

EDA staff continue to work diligently with the Novarum team and their request to enter into a Public-Private Partnership to forward redevelopment on key portions of the City's Opportunity Site.

EDA staff recently engaged with Senator Pha and Mayor Graves about Senator Pha's updated Legislative Pilot Bill. Discussion revolved about the feasibility of including additional tracts to increase potential support for this pilot. Staff worked diligently and connected with other city entities to seek buy-in and legislative alignment.

EDA and Planning staff engaged with a housing developer interested in redeveloping an approximately 2.5-acre site with 150 units of market-rate housing.

EDA staff recently spoke with Frank Gatlin (Gatlin Development Company) regarding Shingle Creek Crossing and continue to work with him in identifying potential users and development opportunities.

EDA staff facilitated a meeting between JB Vang and Resurrecting Faith World Ministries to identify next steps in repurposing two office buildings located at 6200 and 6300 Shingle Creek Parkway as a mixed-use housing and commercial concept.

EDA staff continue to engage with owners of lands adjacent to City EDA-owned land as well as private developers seeking redevelopment proposals. EDA staff engaged with the Twin Cities Land Bank about the potential acquisition of select privately owned parcels adjacent to EDA-owned sites with the objective of assembling larger parcels for more cost-effective development.

EDA and Planning staff have begun discussions about the long-term future land use alignment of larger development parcels as part of the City's 2050 Comprehensive Plan update.

EDA staff continue to engage with CenterPoint District Energy as they continue their process in selecting a finalist for a geothermal pilot district energy system. CenterPoint has indicated plans to attend a City Council meeting sometime in the fall to provide an overview of the project.

Tommy McNeil of McNeil Management hosted an official land launch and fundraiser for the McNeal Event Center at the City's 57th and Logan site. Mr. McNeil has a preliminary development agreement with the City's EDA to develop a portion of the parcel and continues to engage with EDA staff around the next steps to forward the project.

Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings

1. LC Coffee Lounge (6826 Humboldt Avenue North)
2. New Horizon Academy (7100 Brooklyn Boulevard)
3. Mi Tiendita (615 66th Avenue North)

Budget Issues:

None.

Inclusive Community Engagement:

Antiracist/Equity Policy Effect:

Strategic Priorities and Values:

ATTACHMENTS:

None